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Means of implementation

Means of implementation for sustainable forest management

Note by the secretariat

Summary

The means of implementation for sustainable forest management, and financing in particular, have continued to evolve rapidly since the eleventh session of the United Nations Forum on Forests. The present note has been prepared by the secretariat to facilitate the deliberations of the Forum on item 5 of the provisional agenda of its twelfth session, on the means of implementation for sustainable forest management. It provides an overview of two main sets of developments with regard to means of implementation for sustainable forest management. First, it highlights some recent developments in the forest financing landscape, with a focus on the implications of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Global Environment Facility and processes related to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Second, it summarizes the activities of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network, which have been carried out in accordance with its relevant mandates, namely, Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33, as well as the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017-2030 and the quadrennial programme of work of the Forum for the period 2017-2020, which are recommended for adoption by the Council.

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I. Introduction

1. In the quadrennial programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests for the period 2017-2020, recommended by the Forum at its special session, held in January 2017, for adoption by the Economic and Social Council, priority actions on means of implementation for sustainable forest management are identified for each of the twelfth to fifteenth sessions of the Forum. The present note has been prepared by the secretariat of the Forum to facilitate the deliberations of the Forum at its twelfth session on item 5 of its provisional agenda.

2. Section II of the present note includes a brief overview of the facilitative process and how it was strengthened and upgraded to the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network, one of the six components of the international arrangement on forests.

3. Section III includes key developments related to the means of implementation since the eleventh session of the Forum, including the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the sixth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility and the operationalization and activities of the Green Climate Fund.

4. Section IV outlines the progress in the activities and operation of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network, as well as its impact in terms of mobilizing, catalysing and facilitating access to financial, technical and scientific resources to implement sustainable forest management.

5. Section V provides information on the guidance provided in Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33 and the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017-2030 for the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network.

II. Background

6. At the special session of its ninth session, on 30 October 2009, the Forum adopted a resolution on the means of implementation for sustainable forest management in which it decided to establish a facilitative process with eight functions (see E/2009/118-E/CN.18/SS/2009/2, chap. I, sect. B). Two further functions were added at the ninth session of the Forum, in 2011 (see E/2011/42-E/CN.18/2011/20, chap. I, sect. B).

7. At its eleventh session, held in New York in May 2015, the Forum decided to strengthen and upgrade the facilitative process and rename it the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network (see E/2015/42-E/CN.18/2015/14, chap. I, sect. B). Accordingly, the Network was to promote the design of national forest financing strategies to mobilize resources for sustainable forest management, facilitate access to existing and emerging financing mechanisms, including the Global Environment Facility and the Green Climate Fund, and serve as a clearing house on existing, new and emerging financing opportunities and as a tool for sharing lessons learned from successful projects.

8. At its eleventh session, the Forum identified the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network as one of the six components of the international arrangement on forests from 2015 to 2030.

9. The Global Environment Facility was also the subject of several provisions of Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33. In particular, the Council encouraged eligible Member States to make full use of the existing potential of the

sustainable forest management strategy under the sixth replenishment of the Facility. It requested the secretariat of the Forum to engage in discussions with the secretariat of the Facility on how to facilitate collaboration between the Facility and the Forum to support eligible countries in gaining access to funding for sustainable forest management.

10. In addition, the Council invited the Global Environment Facility to consider options for establishing a new focal area on forests during the seventh replenishment of the Facility and to designate among its staff a liaison to serve as a link between the Forum and the Facility to facilitate access to funding for sustainable forest management.

11. The United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017-2030 also includes a section on the means of implementation, in which several opportunities for means of implementation for sustainable development are highlighted, including the replenishment processes of the Global Environment Facility.

III. Key developments related to the means of implementation since the eleventh session of the Forum

12. Since the eleventh session of the Forum, the global forest financing landscape has continued to evolve rapidly, buoyed by its prominent appearance in major agreements, including the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

A. Adoption of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

13. The adoption of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development placed the issue of forest financing firmly on the international agenda for the period 2015-2030.

14. In the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, adopted at the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Addis Ababa in July 2015, forest financing is mentioned in the following provisions:

(a) In a bid to scale up efforts to end hunger and malnutrition, "we will support sustainable agriculture, including forestry, fisheries and pastoralism ... In this regard, we recognize the Committee on World Food Security's voluntary Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems and the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security" (para. 13);

(b) "We encourage the mobilization of financial resources from all sources and at all levels to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity and ecosystems, including promoting sustainable land management, combating desertification, drought, dust storms and floods, restoring degraded land and soil and promoting sustainable forest management" (para. 63).

15. The secretariat of the Forum contributed to highlighting forest financing as an important topic in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, including by holding a side event on the topic on the margins of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which included a range of panellists from developing and developed countries, as well as two members of the Collaborative Partnership

on Forests, namely, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the United Nations Environment Programme.

16. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development contains 17 Sustainable Development Goals, including a Goal on strengthening the means of implementation and revitalizing the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, and four specific targets related to forests (targets 6.6, 15.1, 15.2 and 15.b). Target 15.b states the need to "mobilize significant resources from all sources and at all levels to finance sustainable forest management and provide adequate incentives to developing countries to advance such management, including for conservation and reforestation".

B. Global Environment Facility

17. During its sixth replenishment cycle, launched in mid-2014, the Global Environment Facility has continued to implement a comprehensive sustainable forest management programme aimed at increasing funding for sustainable forest management while enhancing the integrated approach and the multiple environmental benefits in the focal areas of climate change, biodiversity and land degradation. This sustainable forest management programme operates as an incentive mechanism that leverages the Facility's national allocations, resulting in targeted funding totalling $750 million in support of all types of forest. The programme simplified access to forest funding, in particular for small island developing States and the least developed countries.

18. The programme of the sixth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility has benefited from lessons learned during the implementation of the fifth replenishment programme and is based on four objectives aimed at maintaining, managing and restoring forest resources and enhancing regional and global cooperation. This strategy has been very successful; as of February 2017, 39 country projects and 4 programmes addressing sustainable forest management were approved in 47 countries, mobilizing $711 million in grants from the Facility and leveraging an expected amount of $4.3 billion in co-financing. The sustainable forest management programme and projects are implemented by 10 implementing agencies. The secretariat of the Global Environment Facility is also cooperating with the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network of the Forum in identifying sustainable forest management opportunities and supporting countries to access funding.

19. Currently, the seventh replenishment period of the Global Environment Facility (2018-2022) is under preparation. A new sustainable forest management programme strategy is being developed in consultation with member countries of the Facility and other stakeholders, taking into account the new development agenda, including the Paris Agreement, the Sustainable Development Goals, the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017-2030 and guidance from the Forum. The seventh replenishment of the Facility will be launched in July 2018.

C. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

20. Three relevant developments have taken place with regard to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change since the eleventh session of the Forum. First, in May 2015, five years after its proposed establishment at the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Green Climate Fund became operational, with

over $10 billion in pledges.[1] The Fund is focused on financing actions to both mitigate and adapt to climate change and includes forests and land use as one of its four priority areas for climate change mitigation. Among its investment criteria, it includes "paradigm shift potential" in terms of innovation, potential for scaling up and replication, potential for learning and contribution to national regulatory frameworks and policies. The Fund has no specific amount of funding earmarked for forests. In the light of the size of its endowment, therefore, the Fund is poised to make a highly significant contribution to financing sustainable forest management.

21. The Green Climate Fund calls for proposals for four types of projects according to funding size, the largest category (large project) being in excess of $250 million. As of January 2017, the Fund had approved at least six cross-sectoral projects in nine countries (Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, the Gambia, Jamaica, Mexico, Morocco, Senegal and Viet Nam), which are focused at least partially on forests, totalling $140.1 million in grants and a further $20 million in guarantees.[2]

22. Another relevant development is the work of the Standing Committee on Finance of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Since 2014, the Standing Committee has held regular preparatory meetings. On 8 and 9 September 2015, on the margins of the XIV World Forestry Congress, held in Durban, South Africa, the Standing Committee held its third forum, on the theme "coherence and coordination issues related to finance for forests, taking into account different policy approaches".

23. The secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests actively participated in the third forum of the Standing Committee on Finance, notably by presenting a map of forest financing sources, with the key message that finance from the United Nations Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation and the Role of Conservation, Sustainable Management of Forests and Enhancement of Forest Carbon Stocks in Developing Countries (REDD-plus) is only one of the components of the broader category of financial flows that help to implement sustainable forest management. The background paper to the third forum of the Standing Committee contains a wealth of data and knowledge produced or relayed by the secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests.

24. In addition, the secretariat of the Forum made a presentation at a side event organized by the Standing Committee on Finance at the United Nations Climate Change Conference held in Bonn, Germany, in May 2016.

25. There were two primary conclusions of the third forum of the Standing Committee on Finance: (a) the forest financing map is extremely complex, with multiple flows interacting, sometimes synergistically, sometimes in contradiction with one another, from private and public, domestic and international sources, hence the need to enhance coordination at all levels; and (b) there is a lack of qualitative and quantitative data on forest financing flows, resulting in part from a lack of common understanding of what constitutes forest financing and what does not

26. The third major development was the adoption of the Paris Agreement at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Paris in December 2015. The Paris Agreement has important implications for financing sustainable forest management for two reasons.

[1] See www.greenclimate.fund/about-gcf/global-context#history.

[2] See www.greenclimate.fund/projects/browse-projects.

27. Under article 5 of the Paris Agreement, parties are encouraged to take action to implement and support policy approaches and positive incentives for activities relating to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries (REDD-plus), as well as alternative policy approaches, such as joint mitigation and adaptation approaches for the integral and sustainable management of forests (see FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21, annex).

28. At a time when funds are waning owing to the completion of the first phase of REDD-plus (developing a strategy supported by grants), its recognition in the Paris Agreement is believed to have given REDD-plus new impetus to promote its implementation (phases two and three), with support in part from the Green Climate Fund.

29. Under article 4 of the Paris Agreement, each party is to prepare, communicate and maintain successive nationally determined contributions that it intends to achieve in order to mitigate and/or adapt to climate change. A large proportion of the 121 parties that have submitted nationally determined contributions so far have included activities in land-use, land use change and forestry. While nationally determined contributions are not a source of financing per se, they have the potential to effectively attract funding to the activities listed, including in terms of sustainable forest management.

30. As of January 2017, 128 out of 197 parties had ratified the Paris Agreement, which entered into force on 4 November 2016. The first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement was held in Marrakech, Morocco, from 15 to 18 November 2016.

31. Coupled with a strengthened financial mechanism of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, through the operationalization of the Green Climate Fund, the Paris Agreement has the potential to galvanize significant amounts of financing for sustainable forest management in the near future.

32. Nevertheless, two conditions are necessary for climate finance to be harnessed for sustainable forest management. First, an adequate amount of climate finance would need to target forests in addition to other targeted sectors such as transport, infrastructure and agriculture. Second, it is important to ensure that forest-related activities supported by climate finance are coherent with the holistic nature of sustainable forest management.

IV. Progress in the activities and operation of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network

33. The Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network works to mobilize resources for sustainable forest management and to facilitate access for countries to existing and emerging financing mechanisms, including the Global Environment Facility and the Green Climate Fund. The Network also provides a platform for sharing best practices and lessons learned on existing, new and emerging financing opportunities.

A. Activities and outputs

34. Since its inception in May 2015, the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network has made important efforts to contribute to the scaling up of sustainable

forest management by facilitating access for countries to resources, in accordance with its mandate as stated in Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33.

35. Prior to the eleventh session of the United Nations Forum on Forests, the secretariat of the Forum oversaw the implementation of the following activities and outputs: (a) one global study and three subregional studies (Central Asia, the Pacific and Southern Africa) on harnessing climate financing for sustainable forest management; and (b) three workshops on harnessing climate financing for sustainable forest management in Central Asia, Southern Africa and the Pacific, held in Tehran from 29 April to 1 May 2014, Johannesburg, South Africa, from 7 to 9 October 2014 and Suva from 28 to 30 October 2014, respectively.

36. The three workshops were complemented by a fourth workshop, held in Bangkok from 23 to 25 March 2015, on enhancing coordination between climate and forest finance in South-East Asia. Each of the subregional workshops resulted in the endorsement of key action points by relevant member States, which were further developed into regional strategies on harnessing climate financing for forests.[3]

37. The regional strategies for Central Asia, the Pacific and Southern Africa all identified the need to build the capacity of relevant Member States in formulating project proposals on sustainable forest management. In a bid to launch the implementation of these strategies and with financial support from the regular programme of technical cooperation, the secretariat held three workshops in 2015 on building capacity to mobilize climate financing for sustainable forest management through project design and formulation in the Pacific, Central Asia and Southern Africa, in Nadi, Fiji, from 5 to 9 October, Tehran from 26 to 30 October and Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, from 16 to 20 November, respectively.

38. As a result of the workshops, a total of 71 participants from 24 Member States received training in project formulation on sustainable forest management.

39. Two lessons were learned from the project. First, in order for climate finance to be harnessed more effectively for the implementation of sustainable forest management, coordination needs to be enhanced between forest-related and climate-related institutions at all levels. This includes not only institutions at the national level, but also those at the regional and international levels, notably the relevant entities of the United Nations, such as the secretariat of the Forum and the subsidiary bodies and operational entities of the financing mechanism of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, such as the Standing Committee on Finance and the Green Climate Fund.

40. This first lesson is consistent with calls for further cooperation with partners on forest financing (see, in particular, E/2011/42-E/CN.18/2011/20, chap. I, sect. B, para. 34, Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33, para. 14 (a), and paragraph 62 of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017-2030). The secretariat of the Forum has therefore intensified cooperation with the Standing Committee on Finance of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, as described in section III.C above. The secretariat has also developed closer collaboration with the Global Environment Facility and the Green Climate Fund, as described below.

41. Second, virtually all participating Member States in the three capacity-building workshops identified the need to build national capacity to mobilize

[3] For additional information on the implementation of this project from January 2014 to May 2015, see paras. 27-32 of the report of the Secretary-General on the means of implementation for sustainable forest management and forest law enforcement and governance at all levels (E/CN.18/2015/4). All outputs are available from http://unff-fp.un.org/unff-projects/climate-change-financing/.

financing from multilateral financial mechanisms as a priority, including those of forest-related institutions to harness climate financing. In this regard, the workshops have galvanized Member States to make a large number of requests to the secretariat of the Forum to assist in building capacity at the national level.

42. Drawing from both lessons, the secretariat of the Forum has focused recent activities of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network on promoting the design of national forest financing strategies to mobilize resources for sustainable forest management and facilitating access to existing and emerging financing mechanisms, including the Global Environment Facility and the Green Climate Fund, consistent with its mandate.

43. In this respect, the secretariat of the Forum has received requests from a total of 10 Member States for the support of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network in designing national forest financing strategies and/or facilitating access to financing mechanisms. Support provided to each of these countries is described in chronological order below.

44. Cameroon was the first country to request Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network assistance, in July 2015. With financial support from the regular programme of technical cooperation, the secretariat provided capacity-building and technical support to the Ministry of Forests and Fauna. A capacity-building workshop on project development and formulation, with particular focus on the Global Environment Facility and the Green Climate Fund, was held Douala, Cameroon, from 1 to 5 February 2016 and brought together 22 participants from the Ministry of Forests and Fauna, the Ministry of the Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development and the Ministry of Finance, as well as representatives from local non-governmental organizations.

45. Following stakeholder consultations, the Ministry of Forests and Fauna selected the International Union for Conservation of Nature to be its implementing partner and identified several collaborating partners, including the World Wildlife Fund, the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) and the Ministry of the Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development. The team produced a concept note for the management and conservation of the permanent forest estate of Cameroon in order to enhance the contribution of forests to climate change mitigation and adaptation and to the national economy. The $80 million project proposal is targeted at the Green Climate Fund. The International Union for Conservation of Nature and the Ministry of Forests and Fauna plan on providing $20 million in co-financing.

46. Senegal was the second country to request assistance, in September 2015. With financial assistance from the regular programme of technical cooperation, the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network supported the Directorate of Water and Forests of the Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development of Senegal. First, a capacity-building workshop was held Thiès, Senegal, from 21 to 25 November 2015, bringing together 25 representatives from the Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development, the Ministry of Finance and non-governmental organizations. The workshop was hosted and co-financed by the Directorate of Water and Forests and was focused on developing project proposals for the Global Environment Facility and the Green Climate Fund. It also helped to spur discussions on designing a proposal for a project on sustainable forest management to be financed by the Green Climate Fund.

47. With further technical advice from the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network, the Directorate of Water and Forests prepared a concept note for the Green Climate Fund for a project with a total budget of $39 million, including $35 million from the Green Climate Fund. The project proposal involves an overhaul of forest

management in Senegal through the creation of a mechanism of payments for forest ecosystem services, building on existing mechanisms and pilot initiatives, and will be implemented first in the coastal zone of Senegal and along the Senegal River Basin before being implemented nationwide.

48. As of January 2017, the project concept note had been submitted to the secretariat of the Green Climate Fund, which released a grant for the preparation of the full project proposal, known as a project preparation grant. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as the implementing entity for the project, is providing technical assistance to the Directorate of Water and Forests of Senegal in preparing the project proposal.

49. Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network activities also involve regional and subregional organizations and processes. In this regard, the African Union Commission submitted a formal request for assistance in March 2015 to the Network and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in building the capacity of African countries to access forest financing from existing and emerging multilateral sources, particularly for climate change mitigation and adaptation. With financial support from the regular programme of technical cooperation, the Network provided technical and capacity-building support to the African Union Commission. The secretariat of the Forum and the African Union Commission jointly organized a capacity-building workshop for accessing financing for sustainable forest management for African countries, held in Addis Ababa from 28 November to 2 December 2016. The workshop was attended by 64 representatives from 32 countries, regional and subregional organizations, civil society organizations and academia.

50. The secretariat of the Forum also responded to the requests for Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network support in mobilizing financing for sustainable forest management from Nigeria, Uganda and Zimbabwe, with financial support from the regular programme of technical cooperation. A capacity-building workshop on project development and formulation, with a special focus on multilateral funding, was held in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, from 10 to 14 October 2016. It was attended by 26 participants drawn from the Forestry Commission, the Ministry of Water, Environment and Climate and the Ministry of Finance of Zimbabwe, civil society, academia and UNDP. The Forestry Commission has selected UNDP as its implementing entity and is targeting funding from the Green Climate Fund. Similar support activities for Nigeria and Uganda are scheduled for the first quarter of 2017.

51. In May 2016, the secretariat of the Forum received a request from the State Forest Resources Agency of Ukraine for support in mobilizing financing for sustainable forest management. With financial assistance from the regular programme of technical cooperation, the secretariat of the Forum and the State Forest Resources Agency organized a workshop, held in Kyiv from 12 to 16 December, to build the capacity of key institutions in accessing funding from existing and emerging financing institutions.

52. The State Forest Resources Agency also requested support in developing a national forest financing strategy. As of January 2017, the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network has been providing technical support to the Agency in mapping forest financing opportunities as a first step towards developing a national forest financing strategy. As part of this strategy, the Agency aims to contribute to the preparation of a project proposal to the Global Environment Facility on smart agriculture, including the sustainable management of forest shelter belts, in northern and central Ukraine.

53. Papua New Guinea also submitted a request in May 2016 for support from the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network in facilitating access to existing and

emerging financing mechanisms. On the basis of that request, the secretariat of the Forum secured financing from the regular programme of technical cooperation to build and enhance the capacity of the Papua New Guinea Forest Authority to access funding from multilateral funding institutions, with a focus on the Green Climate Fund. In this regard, a workshop was held in Port Moresby from 6 to 10 February 2017.

54. During the workshop, a total of 21 participants from different forest and environment-related government authorities learned about a wide variety of donors and acquired new skills on stakeholder mapping and participation, designing logical frameworks and developing project ideas. A team of national and international consultants was also set up to assist the Papua New Guinea Forest Authority to develop a concept note for a project on sustainable forest management, which is planned to be submitted before December 2017.

55. The most recent country to have begun to benefit from support from the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network is the Niger, which submitted a request to the secretariat of the Forum to this effect in July 2016. Through the regular programme of technical cooperation, a capacity-building workshop on accessing funding from multilateral financing mechanisms is scheduled to be held in Niamey from 13 to 17 March 2017.

56. Two further requests, from Madagascar and the Islamic Republic of Iran, have been submitted to the secretariat of the Forum to seek the support of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network in designing national forest financing strategies and accessing financing mechanisms.

B. Impact of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network

57. Since its inception in May 2015, and drawing from the lessons of the facilitative process, the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network has contributed to the design of national forest financing strategies, assisted countries in mobilizing, accessing and enhancing the effective use of existing financial resources and initiated preliminary work to serve as a clearing house on financing opportunities. It has operated both at the subregional and the national levels through capacity-building workshops and by providing tailor-made technical advice. It has also cooperated closely with key international partners, including members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, such as the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Global Environment Facility.

58. The Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network, through its approval of a concept note by the secretariat of the Green Climate Fund for a project on sustainable forest management in Senegal, paved the way for the consideration of a $39 million project for sustainable forest management. It is expected that support provided by the Network to the other countries mentioned in section III.A above would facilitate the mobilization of additional funds in the near future.

59. This experience has also enabled the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network to draw some initial lessons on the most effective means of mobilizing financing for sustainable forest management. While still at an early stage of its implementation, it appears that bilateral initiatives are particularly effective in harnessing forest financing, especially in the light of Senegal's success, as mentioned above.

60. Bilateral initiatives enable the secretariat of the Forum to provide technical support, including capacity-building, that is tailor-made to a country's circumstances, as it takes into account national policies and strategies, consistent

with its mandate and priorities (see Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33, para. 13 (c), and paragraph 62 (b) of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017-2030). The special circumstances of each of the countries that have been supported so far only confirm this lesson.

61. This does not preclude the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network from implementing initiatives at the global, regional or subregional levels, especially given that regional and subregional organizations are often key partners in implementing sustainable forest management. It suggests instead that regional or subregional initiatives could act as an enabling stage that can be combined with follow-up support to individual Member States that express both interest in and commitment to mobilizing forest financing by accessing specific sources.

62. The experience also provides an insight into the articulation between the functions of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network, as mandated in paragraph 13 of Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33. In particular, it points towards the complementarity between promoting national forest financing strategies and assisting countries in mobilizing targeted financial resources through, for example, multilateral financial mechanisms. With the recent tendency of many donors to invest large amounts of funding into nationwide, long-term programmes as opposed to projects that are discrete in time and space, national strategies and projects are increasingly being viewed as two ends of the same continuum. In addition, rather than necessitating a set of stand-alone activities, the third function of the Network — that of a clearing house — could be largely encompassed by the first two functions, on the promotion of national forest financing strategies and assistance in accessing specific financial resources.

V. Guidelines for the operation of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network

63. The United Nations Forum on Forests, through Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33 and the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017-2030, has provided consistent guidance on the functions, priorities and modalities of work of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network. Pursuant to resolution 2015/33, the functions of the Network are:

(a) To promote the design of national forest financing strategies to mobilize resources for sustainable forest management, including existing national initiatives, within the framework of national forest programmes or their equivalent, to facilitate access to existing and emerging financing mechanisms, including the Global Environment Facility and the Green Climate Fund, consistent with their mandates, in order to implement sustainable forest management;

(b) To serve as a clearing house on existing, new and emerging financing opportunities and as a tool for sharing lessons learned from successful projects, building on the Collaborative Partnership on Forests online sourcebook for forest financing.

64. The resolution also provides guidance on the working modalities of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network, namely, by: (a) designating the secretariat of the Forum as the manager of the Network; (b) giving special consideration to the special needs and circumstances of Africa, the least developed countries, low-forest-cover countries, high-forest-cover countries, medium-forest-cover low-deforestation countries and small island developing States, as well as countries with economies in transition, in gaining access to funds; and (c) strengthening collaboration with the

member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests in implementing the activities of the Network.

65. The United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017-2030 also sets out priorities for the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network. Accordingly, the Network's priorities are:

(a) To promote and assist Member States in designing national forest financing strategies to mobilize resources for sustainable forest management, including existing national initiatives, within the framework of national forest programmes or other appropriate national frameworks;

(b) To assist countries in mobilizing, accessing and enhancing the effective use of existing financial resources from all sources for sustainable forest management, taking into account national policies and strategies;

(c) To serve as a clearing house and database on existing, new and emerging financing opportunities and as a tool for sharing lessons learned and best practices from successful projects, building on the Collaborative Partnership on Forests online sourcebook for forest financing;

(d) To contribute to the achievement of the global forest goals and targets of the strategic plan, as well as priorities contained in the quadrennial programmes of work.

66. In accordance with the quadrennial programme of work of the Forum for 2017-2020, the Forum at its twelfth session may hold initial discussions on guidelines for the operation of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network, which are to be considered at its thirteenth session, in 2018. Given the above-mentioned existing guidance on the functions, modalities and priorities of the Network, which are contained in Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/33 and the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017-2030, the Forum may wish to consider whether further guidelines are required at this juncture. In addition, the Forum may wish to consider the option of providing additional guidelines at its session in 2020, when the Forum will review the work of the Network in the context of its decision on the next quadrennial programme of work.